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PEOPLE NOT PROFIT

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LIVERPOOL BUSINESS ELITE SPYING ON US ALL

The self-named Citysafe Partnership (CSP) has just been given the go ahead by the home office to continue its monitoring of the coming and going of people in the city centre of Liverpool. The plan to upgrade the present 28 Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and install a further 71 cameras will cost an extra £1.9milion. The CSP are so proud of their plans that they brag about the fact that these cameras are so powerful that they can read a newspaper headline from 250 feet. Not only that, In the near future, many camera systems will incorporate parabolic microphones to detect conversations on the street, in parks, in shops and in restaurants. And sophisticated software already on the market will allow the cameras to analyse the movement and activities of individuals or groups in public places. Yet their claims that the further intensification of surveillance cameras helps police detect criminal activity and make the streets safer are not backed up with any evidence, in fact all major research in this area points to the contrary.

A 2-year study carried out by Professor Jason Ditton from Sheffield University concluded that: "What we have been able to show is that CCTV didn't reduce crime - if anything it has increased - and it didn't reduce fear of crime. If anything there was a slight increase in anxiety." And another recent study carried out by the Scottish Centre for Criminology found that 'virtually all claims of crime prevention are false. Crimes of passion, crimes involving drugs and alcohol, and actions by professional criminals are not prevented by the cameras'. One study by Brighton University's Health and Social Policy Research Centre flatly concluded that 'there is no evidence they are having any deterrent effect on criminals'. In fact, the report says the incidence of violence and disorder in the areas covered by the cameras is on the increase. So why bother with CCTV you may ask?

According to researchers at John Moores University the major reason for the installation of CCTV is to protect the profits and interests of Businesses in Liverpool. And CSPs claims that their major aims are to protect people, in particular women, are a myth. Anyone who has seriously studied crime knows, violent crime does not go on in the city centre, and a better suggestion would be that if CSP are interested in helping the public, forget about CCTV and provide something more useful like adequate Toilets, Crèche facilities and cheap reliable transport.

The CSP is part of the Liverpool City Centre Partnership (LCCP) and is loosely connected to local government. They consist of Shop Owners, Businessmen, Private Security Firms and the Police i.e. the Liverpool Elite. With the help of the local media they were involved in the process to promote Liverpool as a business (rich) friendly city, not a city to benefit all its inhabitants; but to attract those with the money to spend and exclude those without. Their major public relations policies were to present Liverpool as 'A Maritime City, 'A Pool of Talent' and 'Local And Proud' and to get away from it being a city where people are prepared to stand up for themselves. Thus a city where business people can be protected when exploiting and forcing its local inhabitants (us) into non-unionised, cheap labour, short-term contract jobs. CCTV while protecting business interests also does the double whammy of promoting the idea that it is we the people who need to be watched because we are the criminals.

Experts in Criminology know that most major crimes go on behind closed doors, be that drug related, corporate or domestic. It is a myth to believe that serious crime goes on in the main shopping area of Liverpool. Serious crime goes on in the cubs and boardrooms of businesses and in the police stations of the city. We don't have cameras in the back of police vans, monitoring the criminal activity of police officers; we don't have them in the offices of gangsters and the business elite who run this city. You can be sure if that was the case, and we could watch them, they wouldn't be raving about CCTV. In fact nationally there is growing evidence that CCTV is not solely being used to spy on people shopping in the city centre. And the recent revelation that one of the top securities firms in the city was run by a man with a history of gun running and drug dealing, should give us furthur cause for mistrust. In 1996 a Brentwood man complained that images of his attempted suicide had been broadcast on national television. One camera operator in Mid Glamorgan has been convicted on more than 200 counts of using cameras to spy on women, and then making obscene phone calls to them from the control room. The magazine New Scientist reports that one leisure centre has placed cameras in a women's changing room, and was being monitored by men. Other research shows that CCTV is being used to overtly discriminate against certain groups. One camera operator in Burnley told a Granada documentary "people mainly with shirts and ties are OK. Most people you can tell just by looking at them". Another said, "I tell by the hair". A recent report by Hull University highlighted endemic discrimination against blacks, gays, minorities and young people. They can also be used to monitor demonstrations or political groups in the city centre.

The all seeing, but un-seen eye of a private security firm

In the Dingle, the Dion Youth Centre was closed down because the council said it needed £30,000 to stay open. Then they installed £70,000 worth of CCTV camaras to spy on the local population.

One of the offshoots of Liverpool's CitySafe Partnership is a group called CrimeAlert, which consists of the local business elite who meet monthly with undercover Police officers and discuss who should be targeted for surveillance. We know organisations like the Big Issue have been infiltrated; we know, like elsewhere it is young people generally who fall under the suspicious eye - it's only a matter of time before new groups like People Not Profit are targeted. Because a high priority of People Not Profit is to expose the sham of rip-off high street stores and corruption in Liverpool.

We know that Citysafe Partnership, CrimeAlert or Liverpool City Centre Partnership, are not really interested in this city, or its inhabitants, they are interested in taking as much money off us as they can and putting it into their pockets – and grabbing any money coming into the city, (supposedly geared towards the interests of its inhabitants) and putting that into their pockets. They are transforming the city centre into a consumer playground – an exclusive space for money and people of the 'right sort'. CCTV is not about protecting all our interests; it's about protecting their interests at the expense of reducing our right to go were we want in our city; it's about excluding individuals and groups they don't like. These developments reinforce the power of business to shape our city and the people in it as 'good consumers'. All of this is backed by CCTV, private security firms and police officers – watching and controlling us. The city centre should not belong to them; it should belong to us, all of us.

Editors Notes

Lack of space and the importance of discussing the ever encroaching surveillance techniques of the 'State', have led us to postpone some of the regular sections and dedicate a large section of this issue to exposing what we believe is a extremely serious attack on our freedom of movement: the intensification of CCTV use, the monitoring of all our activities, and the new laws slipping in the back door. And surprise, surprise, those restricting our freedom claim to have our interests at heart. We say **Resist to Exist**, there is no alternative.

DEFINITELY NOT CANDID CAMERA

To press the point further, not only do the powerful want to monitor our every move in public and commercial spaces, but they also want to delve into our private life. A document recently commissioned by ACPO (Association of Police Chief Constables) and written by Roger Gasper, the most powerful man in the intelligence service (MI5, MI6 etc.), and leaked to the Guardian revealed that the police, security and intelligence services have applied to the government for the power to monitor every phone call, email or internet activity carried out by everyone in the UK. This information will then be stored in a huge 'data warehouse' for 7 years.

Who asked us if we wanted to be on Big Brother? It is becoming more apparent to any streetwise psychologist that the powerful and their agents and protectors must lead pretty sad lives, spending all their time getting worried and paranoid about what we, the public, do in private. Or maybe they are so scared that more and more of us are realising that their flimsy system is built on nothing but lies and corruption. A spokesman for the National Criminal Intelligence Service, who produced the document said he was 'Not going to comment on a classified document that is in unauthorised hands'.

We wonder what he's got to hide?

More info:

www.spy.org.uk
www.legend.org.uk
www.statewatch.org

BEWARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!

New Labour's announcement this month that they are going to hand the unaccountable Military Police the power to deal with civilian 'public order' problems is a serious attack upon civil liberties. In France the national semi-military police force CRS have a fearsome reputation for the violent disruption of demonstrations and strikes, for brutal beatings and deaths in custody. In Merseyside, the closest equivalent we have is the Operational Support Division. If you haven't had the pleasure of meeting the charming officers of the OSD, they are the ones that hang out in the bull-barred Ford Trannies with "Support Group" written on the side. Far from being supportive of the public, the "snatch squad" are assigned a roving policing role, designed to respond to public order problems when and as required.

OSD regularly embarrass the rest of their colleagues, not because of their enthusiasm for violence, but because they get caught so often. In two notorious recent cases, OSD were caught dishing out their own particular form of summary justice on CCTV - although no officers were disciplined in either case.

In September 1999, after the Liverpool v Manchester United match OSD were again in the frame for beating up dozens of law abiding citizens, including a man in a wheelchair and a 15 year old boy in Slater St. Such was the stupidity of the OSD that they didn't realise they were being covered by CCTV (again). Mind you, despite the 70 complaints lodged with the Police Complaints Authority, only three were identified for abuse of authority. Many of the OSD were wearing scarves to hide their identity. The OSD were also the ring-leaders of the police violence used against the dockers picket line which led to 4 local MPs calling for an inquiry to establish why numerous pickets were dragged away and beaten up in vans.

This is precisely what happens when a section of police officers are left to their own devices and given the task of protecting the 'public order'. The extension of powers to the military police can only lead to more brutal treatment meted out to anyone that dares stand up against the expansion of state and corporate power.

www.statewatch.org.uk

ANGER IN KIRKBY

Residents in Kirkby have set up an action group to campaign against the pollution caused by the Sonae chipboard plant.

A number of options are being considered, including direct action. A march through Kirkby to highlight the issue is planned.

Sonae spews out noxious fumes, day and night, which the company claim is just steam, but which sometimes takes the form of a 'Blue Haze' said to be formaldehyde (a carcinogen). A white dust from it settles on everything around. Wood dust is particularly nasty. It can puncture the lungs and cause respiratory disease.

People living nearby have complained to the local council about breathing problems and an investigation revealed toxic chemicals including dioxin and mercury. Environmental Health suggested a few alterations to the chimney to make the plume disperse further. Emissions, they say, are within limits.

Kirkby people, who have had to suffer years of constant bombardment by a cocktail of chemicals from the industrial estate – the biggest in Europe – are fed up with this latest polluter.

One resident said that in her road – only about a hundred yards long – there have been eleven deaths from cancer.

The Sonae plant may not be responsible for cancer in Kirkby - yet! But it is certain these emissions will cause cancers in the future if they are not stopped. How do we know this? Because exactly the same problems have been caused by a chipboard plant in North Wales. And cancers of the nose and mouth have resulted.

Kronospan, a Swiss company, set up their chipboard plant nearly twenty years ago, outside a town called Chirk, in North Wales. Once a thriving tourist trap, the town has virtually closed down because tourists won't brave the fumes.

The company has been prosecuted for releasing formaldehyde into the atmosphere, and they had two deaths at the plant because of lax health and safety. Twenty years on and the wood dust from the plant still settles nearby. Chronic asthma, respiratory diseases and cancers are reported.

So, here are two chipboard plants with almost identical ways of working, even getting their wood from managed forests and adding some old doors to give them cred in the now sexy world of recycling.

What is ominous, though, is the role of the local councils. Both invited the plants to their location, both have agreed to expansion – the Kronospan plant to produce Medium Density Fibreboard, (MDF, another baddie) - and Sonae to get a rail link. Both say that the emissions are within limits. You would think that Kronospan would have something going for it: at least they have a trade union – the T&G. But no, the plant has been described as a 'Hell Hole', and the local official says: "What can we do if they are within the law?"

The people of Kirkby will answer that one!

Some of PNP Coming Events

resistance is fertile.

* 8th March - **International Women's Day** - Against the exploitation of women in sweatshops. Demo and picket of the Gap, Assemble 12 Noon, St Lukes, Berry St. (top Bold St). Organised by PNP.
* 8th March - **IWD night**, Bands, Acoustics, Poets. Zanzibar, Seel St. 9-2am. £3/3.50
* 17th March - **Paddy's Day**. The Jim Larkin Band are marching from Shenanigans, Tithebarn St. 12 Noon.
* 17th March - **Solidarity with refugees**. Casbah/Blakes, Hope St. 8 -2am. Donation.
* Every Friday - **Club Resistance,** Masque, Seel St. 8-2am. Free.
* 28th April - **Workers Memorial Day** - Remember those who have died from work related injuries and disease. FIGHT for the living. The Podium, Church St. 1-4

ALL PROCEEDS OF EVERYTHING WE DO GO BACK INTO THE RESISTANCE.

To find out more or get involved contact us:

LOCAL ROUND UP

ONLY DOING THEIR JOB

POLICE are to look again at claims that officers planted a screwdriver on a schoolboy.

Paul Keoghan, 13, was arrested in Bootle and charged with going equipped to burgle.

However, a court was told that PC Victor O'Rourke got a red-handled screwdriver out of the boot of his police car and said the boy had it in his trouser pocket.

Two other officers, Constables Adrian Smith and David Manning, backed up the allegation.

The court heard how CCTV footage of the car park in Stuart Road, Bootle, which showed the officer getting the screwdriver from the boot, had since vanished.

NO LAUGHING POLICEMAN

POLICE are investigating a rival internet website set up using the name merseysidepolice.com.

The site, which has a similar domain name to the force's official site, encourages people to send in complaints about the force and its officers, and allegations of corruption.

Visitors to the unofficial site, which has been visited by more than 1,000 people, learn that it has been set up to "redress the uneven playing field and grossly unsatisfactory and inadequate procedures that exist where police wrongdoing occurs."

It continues: "For the first time, members of the public can tell the world of their bad experiences and so inform of Merseyside Police wrongdoing, Merseyside Police corruption and unsatisfied complaints filed against Merseyside Police."

Remember: **merseysidepolice.com.**

CASH FOR HOT AIR

THE cost of running Liverpool Vision, the city's Government-backed urban regeneration company, has soared by 65pc.

The city's council taxpayers are being asked to stump up £330,000 to pay the salaries of three new executive directors.

As well as the council, the other funding partners English Partnerships and the North West Development Agency are also being asked to contribute £330,000 per year.

Overheads for Liverpool Vision are estimated at £219,000 per year but rent for its offices at the Observatory, Old Haymarket, amounts to £62,000.

"The rest covers rates, electricity and other bills and the cost of setting up the offices," explained Mr Rae, who added: "We do run a pretty tight ship."

So tight we wondered where our money went. **PNP**

NO CASH FOR THE LOCALS

While Objective one money lines the pockets of companies and consultants, 50 community projects are in danger of collapse because funds have been withheld by government. Credit unions, food co-ops and house renovation projects have been referred to the 'State Aid' Policy Unit – a shadowy office in Whitehall which rules on so-called "unfair competition".

So a small local Food Co-op receiving some public subsidy could have its plug pulled, if it's deemed to be a threat to the mighty Tesco.

DO IT YOURSELF IN BIRKENHEAD

A group of residents in Birkenhead have set up a Community Centre and Shop, based on the principle of People Not Profit. They manage to maintain themselves, not through receiving money from state agencies, but by generating it through fair trade products, recycled goods and arts and crafts made by local people. They also run reflexology, meditation classes and coffee mornings. Lets show them support. They are based at **49-51 Christchurch Road, Birkenhead. Tel: 653 2269**

If you have a story to tell that isn't being told, about a campaign in your local community – or if you have a tale of injustice – don't hesitate to contact People Not Profit. We know that if we are struggling alone we have very little power to make changes, but together in our common concerns and causes we can not only change our city we can change the world.

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